

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 12, 2017

Dear Colleague:

Over the past three years, members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and representatives from across the aviation industry have debated the need for comprehensive air traffic control reform.

Since this process began, I've had numerous discussions with Chairman Shuster regarding FAA Reauthorization. We've primarily focused on the best approaches for keeping our skies safe and free, while fulfilling the Chairman's goal of unleashing private sector innovation in the management of our ATC system. Chairman Shuster showed a genuine commitment to working through these issues, and because of that commitment and our shared desire to modernize, protect, and improve our nation's aviation system, I want to urge you to join me in supporting H.R. 2997, the *21st Century AIRR Act*.

I've been a pilot for virtually my entire life, and I've been interacting regularly with people in this community for about two decades now. From daily conversations with other pilots to my own personal experiences, I understand the issues that face this industry. That's where I focused my attention during this debate, and I feel very confident that they've been addressed.

Namely, I worked to guarantee that no user fees were levied on any segment of general aviation; to maintain parity on the governing board; protect access to airspace, air traffic services and airports; and ensure the long term sustainability of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which is the main source of funds for our small airports.


With those issues off the table, the final question that remains is a simple one. Do we trust the government or a private entity to more efficiently manage our nation's air traffic control network? As a conservative, the answer for me is an easy one.

The public sector has never been defined by its efficiency. And the private sector has always been better positioned to oversee a project that's completed on time and under budget.

The FAA is no different. No federal agency, including the FAA, has been properly equipped to successfully deliver on a long-term capital project like NextGen because there are simply too many barriers in the federal procurement process, not the least of which is funding uncertainty created by the political process. And I know we can do better.

When we talk about FAA reauthorization, I think about protecting the skies so all of aviation can continue flying safely, securely and freely. That is why I support this bill, because I believe it is in the best interest of everyone in the aviation industry. I look forward to voting for H.R. 2997 when it reaches the House floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Sincerely,



Sam Graves
Member of Congress